

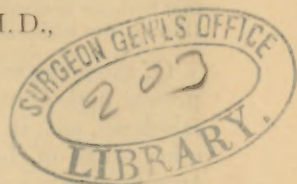
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HIGH POTENCY CRITICISM.*

BY

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IN a paper published in the June issue of this journal I attempted to show that the only logical basis upon which the drug-efficacy of the high potencies rests is composed of a mass of rotten rubbish, called "cures," which have always formed the foundation of every piece of medical quackery by which the world of patients has been deluded from time immemorial. Not denying the existence of the efficacy in question, I appealed from the so-called evidence therefor, to a positive experiment, conducted by the believers themselves, but surrounded with safeguards against wilful or self-deception. In two short months I find myself the centre of a storm of "hail, dunder and blitzen, cyclones, volcanoes, earthquakes, tidal waves, profanity, scurrility, 'open letters,' and nitro-glycerin," as Professor Dudley too truly prophesied.

To put it in the form of a dialogue, it would read about thus :

DR. POTTER.—"I am neither a believer nor an unbeliever in the drug-efficacy of the high potencies, but an agnostic in regard thereto. I respectfully urge that the evidence therefor, though ample in quantity, is utterly deficient in quality; and hope to see some strictly scientific test of the matter made. In absence of a better one, I advocate that known as the Milwaukee Test."

DR. L.—"You must unhesitatingly accept Hahnemann and his homœopathy."

DR. P.—"Read the *Organon*. If that does not suit you, take your maiden name 'Eclectic;' otherwise I will hurl upon you the curse of Rome!!"

DR. B.—"Such an idea as yours is not fit for the mind of a pure Hahnemannian. Your bubble test will soon burst if you champion it."

DR. M.—"Suckling! bow down before your seniors."

* Reprinted from the Hahnemannian Monthly, October, 1879.

Dr. H.—“You have just got your diploma, and are afflicted with a diarrhoea of words. Constrict your upper sphincter.” (*Anglice*, “Shut up!”)

Dr. T.—“Schubert, Caspari, and Grauvogl. These be thy gods, oh, Israel!”

Dr. B., playing on a hand-organ(on).—“You’re a liar! and the Hahnemannian a fraud!”

Dr. J.—“Borborygmi!! dunder und blitzen!! brekekekex, coax, coax!! You’re a piddling pyrrhonist, a callow fledgling, an encyclopædic filterer! *Hic! hæc! hoc!* You part your hair in the middle!! *Hujus! huic!* I must pay my dues to my goddess, Cloacina. He spells Thomson with a *p*. Is that hydrous or anhydrous? *Anhydrous*, by Toodles, P. G. Tait, and Josh Billings, my authorities!”

Of these elegant evidences of splenetic stupidity, I can at present notice but one, namely, the accusation of dishonesty, falsehood, etc., in the matter of Hahnemann’s posology, and other facts of history concerning “the Master” and his apostles, made against me by the editor of the *Organon*, and by Dr. Pearson in the *Homœopath*. The former, in his last issue, takes advantage of an erroneous quotation* made by me in a footnote as an illustration, and calmly condemns my “assertions about Hahnemann, Jenichen, and many others” as “equally inaccurate,” displaying “either a shameful disregard for truth,” etc.

In thus impeaching the historical facts referred to in my paper, the Anglo-American *Organon* impeaches the veracity of Dr. Dudgeon, to whose lectures† I expressly referred‡ as my authority for the facts stated; such as Gross’ infected globules, Mure’s lice and deer-skin provings, the day theory of dose of Cruxent, the potentized shakes of Jenichen, the isopathy and lice eradicators of Hering, and the whimsical and contradictory senility of the immortal Hahnemann himself. As the editor of the Anglo-American *Organon* denies the truth of the facts stated, will it be considered heretical or presumptuous, if I respectfully suggest that the next thing in order is for that gentleman to offer some proof for such a sweeping condemnation?

Again, the editor aforesaid, and Dr. Pearson, accuse me of having falsified the record regarding Hahnemann’s posology. This point they feebly attempt to prove by the use of garbled

* The passage referred to (JUNE HAHNEMANNIAN, page 340, second footnote) was taken second-hand. I made the mistake of using it without having verified it; but corrected this error in a list of errata (*vide* September HAHNEMANNIAN, page 572).—S. P.

† Lectures on the Theory and Practice of Homœopathy, London, 1855, by R. E. Dudgeon, M.D., translator of Hahnemann’s Lesser Writings, and *Organon*.

‡ *Vide* footnote to page 331, JUNE HAHNEMANNIAN.

quotations from Dr. Hahnemann's papers, as well as from mine. My allusions to his dosage referred, not to his theories on the question of drug dynamization, but only to what we know of his actual use of drugs in his practice. I endeavored to show that, taking his homœopathic career as a whole, he was anything but a high-potency man in practice. My generous (?) critics leave out the qualifying words of the sentence they quote from me, and then proceed to quote against me equally garbled extracts from Hahnemann's writings. For example, Dr. Pearson triumphantly claims Hahnemann as a high potentate, he having used "the 90th in epileptic attacks." A reference to the passage* shows the true state of affairs to have been as follows, the italics pointing out the words omitted by Dr. Pearson: "*Once* having prepared a dynamized attenuation of Sulphur, up to the 90th dilution, I administered a drop of it on sugar to an aged unmarried lady who was subject to *rare* epileptic fits (*one every 9, 12, 14 months*), and within an hour afterwards she had an epileptic fit, and since then has remained quite free from them."

Dr. Pearson also states that Hahnemann "risked his life on the 30th, and cured himself of a dangerous attack with the 30th of Coffee," omitting, however, to say that the "cure" was made by "*two olfactations*, of Coff. cr. 30th first, and then of Calc."† He further asserts that Hahnemann, in 1843, "reported cases to Dr. Von Benninghausen, cured with the 60th potency." Turning to the book‡ we find that, in the report of these cases, no potency above the 30th is mentioned, but Merc. and Sulph. were used therein in the 2d; and that the only reason we have for supposing that the 60th was an agent in these cases, is that, in a footnote, Dr. Dudgeon says that Dr. Von Benninghausen says that he (Von Benninghausen) understood Hahnemann to mean the 60th whenever he omitted to designate the potency employed. Truly the self-styled "true follower of Hahnemann" must acknowledge himself guilty of the "reckless unscrupulousness" which he so readily charges to my account.

Again, Dr. Pearson says that in "the entire *Organon*, every page . . . where the dose is referred to at all, the 30th or *higher potencies* always take the precedence." The italics are mine,

* Lesser Writings, page 763.

† Hahnemann's Lesser Writings, page 776. The smelling part of the "cure" would have destroyed its validity in the minds of even most high-potency men of the present day.—S. P.

‡ Op. cit., page 773.



and serve to point out the gross misrepresentation of which my critic is guilty, for in the five editions of that work there is not a single instance recorded of Hahnemann's having used a dilution or potency above the 30th, and but one distinct reference to the existence of such preparations.* Dr. Pearson might just as well have said, with equal truth, that "on every page of the Bible where railroads are referred to at all, the four-foot gauge, or narrower, always takes the precedence." Against such methods of argument I can only state the facts, and leave the conclusions regarding my critic's sincerity of purpose and honesty of statement to be drawn by the reader.

The table entitled "Hahnemann's Posology," in my June paper, was compiled from Dudgeon's lectures. Since its publication I have had the pleasure of reading a more complete presentation of the facts by Dr. Richard Hughes, in the *British Journal of Homœopathy* for April, 1878, from which I have compiled the table appended to this paper, which materially supplements the other. An analysis of the facts stated by Dr. Hughes does not show any material difference in the record. It will be found that all the definite references made by Hahnemann to any dilution higher than the 30th are only five in number, namely :

(1.) In his 71st year (1826) he said he found Thuja 60th more potent than the 30th in sycosis.

(2.) In his 77th year (1832) he said he had "once prepared" the 90th of Sulph. (see ante).

(3.) In his 78th year (1833) he said of the 60th, 150th, and 300th, that their action is of shorter duration than that of the 30th, "which is generally sufficient."

(4.) In the same year on one occasion he prescribed for himself olfactions of the 30th.

(5.) In his 83d year (1838) he mentioned the 50th as having "most penetrating efficacy."

Out of 183 recorded directions for the dose in his writings, after his announcement of the law of similars, only 27 are for the 30th, only one for the 60th, and not one for a higher potency.

Although in his 74th year he fixed on the 30th for every drug, six years later he departed from this rule by prescribing the use of the 6th and 24th ; and after seven years' further ex-

* 5th ed., note to § 287.

perience he ordered from his pharmacist the 3d trituration of several drugs. He used crude drugs for thirty-two years of his homeopathic career, down to the 73d year of his age (1828). In the last year of his life, the 89th, he prescribed Merc. and Sulph. in the 2d; and at his death his pocket-case was found to contain all dilutions from the 3d to the 30th, but none in a higher potency. In 1829 he disapproved of diluting beyond the 30th, saying to Dr. Schreter: "The thing must end somewhere; it cannot go on to infinity;" and, in 1832, he condemned Korsakoff's potencies as useless to the physician, though interesting as a proof of the divisibility of matter.

Therefore I would say with Dr. Hughes, that "the truest disciples of Hahnemann are those who follow him as he was in the years from 1796 to 1828, rather than those who count the 30th itself a low potency, and dwell habitually in an exalted region far above that which the Master but *looked into*, and himself but seldom entered."

HAHNEMANN'S DOSAGE, AS RECORDED BY HIMSELF.
TABULATED FROM A PAPER BY DR. RICHARD HUGHES (*Brit. Jour. Hom., April, 1878*).

Year.	Age	Events and references.	Doses.	ψ	2	3	6	9	12	15	18	24	30	60
1796	41	<i>Law "Similia" unnom'd.</i>	{ Ver. alb., grs. iv. Nux vom. grs. iv. Arn., grs. "a few." Ign., grs. ij-vij. Opium, grs. $\frac{3}{4}$ — $\frac{1}{2}$. Camph., grs. xl. Ledum, grs. vij. Cinch., $\frac{5}{3}$. Ipec., 1 part to 2000.	Arn.	Bell.	Bell. Opi. Cham. Bell.		Nux.			Ars.			
1797	42													
1798	43													
1799	44													
1801	46													
1809	54	Organon, 1st ed.	{ Sp. nit. dul. m℥- } $\frac{3}{4}$ in 24 hours.	Caust. Puls. Rhus. Bry.	Ferr.			Ign. Rheum.	Ars. Ign. Puls. Rhus. China. Asar.	Rhus. Scilla. Asar. Aur. Hyos. Digit. Ledum.	Ars. Bry.	Ars.		
1814	59													
1816	61													
1817	62	Reine Arz., vol. iii.		Guaia. Camph. Sarz.	Aur. Ruta. Sulph. Arg.	Ipec.		Stram.		Scilla. Asar. Aur. Hyos. Digit. Ledum.				
1818	63	Reine Arz., vol. iv.		Euph. Meny. Samb. Calc. a. Tarax. Verbas. Spong. Cicut.	Ac. mur. Ac. phos.	Cycl.	Aur.	Hyos.	Ver. Hyos.		Aur. Hyos.			
1819	64	Mat. Med. Pura, vol. v.												
1821	65	Reine Arz. vol. vi.		Bism.		Coff.	Angus. Stann.	Caps. Dros.			Coloc.	Mang. Acon.		

Thuja.
Spig.
Slaph.

HAHNEMANN'S DOSAGE, AS RECORDED BY HIMSELF—(Continued).

Year.	Age	Events and references.	Doses.	ψ	2	3	6	9	12	15	18	24	30	60
1822	67	Mat. Med. Pura, 2d ed., vol. i.		Cann.			Op. Olean. Arn.	Cina. Ign. Rheum.	Coc. Merc. sol. Ign. Ars.	Merc. c.		Dale. Acon.	Bell. Nux. v. Rhus. Bry. Ars. Hyos. Digit.	
1824	69	Mat. Med. Pura, 2d ed., vol. ii.		Puls. Causl.	Ferr.						Ars.	Hyos.		
1825	70	Reine Artz., 2d ed., vol. iii, iv.		Guai. Camph. Sarz.	Ruta. Sulph. Arg.	Ipec. H. sulph.		Stram.	China. Asar. Verat. Cham. Hyos. Aur.	Scilla. Asar. Ledum.				
1826 1827	71 72	Reine Artz., 2d ed., vol. v. Reine Artz., 2d ed., vol. vi.		Verb.	Bism.	Ac. mur. Amb. Carb. a. Carb. v. Stann.	Angus.	Ac. phos. Caps.				Coloc.	Coloc. Mang. Dros. Cicut. Spong. Thuja. Calc. c. Graph. Lycop. Iod. Mag. c. Ac. nit. Phos. Sepia. Silic. Zinc.	Thuja.
1828	73	Chronic Dis., 1st ed.		Sulph.		Carb. v. Sepia. Natr. c.	Ac. nit. Merc. s. Sulph. Antim. Mang.		Carb. a. Carb. v. Mag. Natr. c.		Amm. c. Bary. c. Calc. c. Graph. Lycop. Magn. c. Magn. m. Ac. nit. Petröl. Silic. Zinc.			

1829 74 Fixed on the 30th as the proper dose for all remedies, for the sake of uniformity.
 1833 78 Spoke of the 60th, 150th, and 300th as efficacious, but of shorter action than the 30th. (Organon, 5th ed.)
 1835 80 Used Ac. nit. 6. (Chron. Dis., 2d ed.)
 1837 82 Directed descending from the 30th to the 24th, when repeating. (Chr. Dis., 2d ed., 3d part.)
 1839 84 Spoke of the efficacy of the 50th. (5th vol.)
 1843 88 Bönninghausen says he used the 60th, not seldom.

NOTE.—The following references, given by Dr. Hughes, are omitted from the above table, in order to economize space: 1814, Hyos. 10; Bry. 16; Rhus 16; 1818, Aur. 1; 1821, Coloc. 21; 1822 Mosch. 3x.

